

be used. In the twelfth edition of *Systema Naturae*, Linné (1766: 117, 166) consistently used the spelling *Paradisea* and this spelling is to be accepted as correct. The family name based on this type-genus should be spelled *Paradiseidae*.

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Sula leucogaster and other species in the Iles Mitsios, Madagascar

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The literature contains no mention of the Iles Mitsios in northwest Madagascar as an important locality for sea-birds in the western Indian Ocean (Milon *et al.* 1973, Feare 1978, C. Jouanin, pers. comm.), but in July 1973 while visiting these islands on board the yacht 'Marimba' I found two rocky islets to be inhabited by many sea-birds, most notable amongst which was a nesting population of the Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster*. These islands are therefore the only major sea-bird locality recorded in coastal waters off Madagascar. A set of colour transparencies of the islands and their bird populations is deposited at the Museum of Zoology, University of Cambridge.

I visited the two islets, Behangovo (centred at 48° 30' 33" E, 13° 00' 01" S; maximum height 61 m) and Betalinjona (centred at 48° 30' 00" E, 12° 59' 04" S; maximum height 74 m) on 6 July 1973; these, together with two other rocks (Antsoha and Betaniazo) which are not colonised by sea-birds, constitute 'Les Quatres Frères', a group which lies some 32 km northeast of Nossi Bé and approximately 35 km west of Port St. Louis, one of the nearest points on the mainland. Neither of the sea-bird colonised islets are easily accessible, for they are climbable only by a single tortuous gully each on their northern sides. Behangovo was visited on the morning of 6 July 1973, and Betalinjona on the afternoon of the same day.

Sula leucogaster was present and nesting in large numbers on both islets; eggs, and naked and downy young were seen. Approximately 100 adults were estimated to be present on Behangovo and some 250 on Betalinjona. On Betalinjona adults were also seen roosting on narrow ledges under the large overhang on the northern aspect of the islet, together with some 50 Common Noddy *Anous stolidus*. The nearest reported population of *Sula leucogaster* is on the Iles Glorieuses, but this has apparently become extinct in recent years (Benson *et al.* 1975).

Both *Fregata ariel* and *F. minor* were present on the islets. A single large frigate was seen in the morning over Behangovo, but large numbers were observed gathering over the islet in the evening. Males of both *F. ariel* and *F. minor* were sighted at Betalinjona, and the numbers gathering over the rock in the evening were estimated at over 100 individuals; no young were seen and none of the males showed obvious gular sacs.

The other conspicuous sea-bird at the rocks was *Phaethon lepturus*. There were 3 sightings at Behangovo, and at least one nest was occupied there at that time. At Betalinjona there were several sightings of flying birds, and there were nests present on the steep southern side of the islet. These records represent the first definite account of *Sula leucogaster* and of a large roosting population of *Fregata* spp. in coastal waters of Madagascar; *Phaethon lepturus* and *Anous stolidus* have been reported previously to nest in the region (Milon *et al.* 1973).

A few land-birds were also present on these islets. There were c. 30 sightings of *Foudia madagascariensis*. A single youngish individual of *Dicrurus forficatus* was seen on Betalinjona, and at least 2 individuals of *Cisticola cherina* were present at Behangovo. Two individual *Dryolimnas cuvieri* were seen at Betalinjona, a dry rocky and sparsely vegetated habitat which does not seem to be typical of this species elsewhere in the region (Milon *et al.* 1973, Benson *et al.* 1976). Two individuals, evidently a pair, of the common *Falco newtoni* were observed on Behangovo.

Sula leucogaster has probably survived on Behangovo and Betalinjona because of the inaccessibility of these islets, but other factors, such as local taboos which are known to have existed on islands to the South until recent times (L. A. Mauge, pers. comm.) could have been important.

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